Constipation

[Reader Advisory: Ugh]

Mitchell never thought much about constipation (who does?) until it quietly arrived in his late seventies. His body had been a tool he used. He never thought about greasing it, feeding it fibre, forgetting fries, having his tires rotated. Turns out, took quite a while to realize he was constipated, almost two years of being *unsettled*. Fatigued, without realizing it. He noticed his poops were irregular, marked by occasional cramps, feeling *wrong,* no way to wake every morning.

Mitchell spent hours in the washroom but never felt like a King, sitting on his throne.

A colonoscopy—thankfully, he was unconscious—resulted in a diagnosis of diverticulosis. Or diverticulitis. Either way, his gut was not pushing stuff through, crud was caught and laxatives were introduced—for the rest of his life. Constipation with periodic diarrhea, an ironic combination.

Fatigued and unsettled in the mornings, better in the afternoon but by then his body was tired, needed sleep. Mitchell resented the naps. He was in his late seventies. Naps were lost time.

Mitchell had enough savings for practical solution: a metal gut. It was stainless steel, would never rust, and it oiled itself. The surgery took several hours, but after regaining consciousness he already felt better. Mitchell went home a happy fellow. He knew his metal gut was green technology and would not digest most meats and fried foods but did not realize how much he would miss them, ice cream, cream puffs.

It grew more difficult when his gut required regular updates and sent him messages through an app on his phone. Some were embarrassing: *you exceeded your monthly quota for fries in three days…you must consume less sugar…if you continue, for elimination of undigested foods you will need sphincter widening and a larger toilet*.

Mitchell was still constipated–in an all encompassing way, for his own good.

(C) Victor Schwartzman 2025. All rights reserved. http://www.VictorSchwartzman.ca